



News Release

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BASS LAKE RANGER DISTRICT FALL/WINTER/SPRING FUELS BURNING PROGRAM

CLOVIS, Calif., October 26, 2016 – “The Bass Lake Ranger District, Sierra National Forest, is preparing to implement the fall/winter burning program,” said District Ranger Denise Tolmie. “Projects will consist of three activities: pile burning, broadcast, and underburning.”

“The objective of these prescribed burns are to reduce fuel loading from recent tree mortality fuel projects within the Wildland Urban Intermix and high use recreation areas around Bass Lake. Site preparation for reforestation within these areas and within the French Fire will also be accomplished with these burns.”

Multiple underburning projects are proposed for the fall/winter/spring of 2016-17. The Source-Kinsman Underburn is located south and west of Clearwater station in the upper Clearwater Creek drainage and the Batterson Administrative burn are located at the work station. Burning will be conducted in moderately unstable atmospheric conditions and on Burn Days to provide optimum smoke dispersal. Burning will stop if smoke dispersion becomes a problem, suppression tactics will then also be implemented. Stump holes and logs may be mopped up to reduce the smoldering phase of combustion. High use roads will be monitored for visibility hazards, and traffic control will be provided when necessary.

Pile burning objectives are to remove fuels created during timber harvest, reforestation, and fuels reduction in high value areas such as along Wildland Urban Intermix and Nelder Grove Historical Area. The removal of these fuels provides a benefit by reducing the potential of a wildfire that would cause damage to wildlife habitat, watersheds, and private property.

Pile burning projects are widely dispersed throughout the Bass Lake Ranger District. While many of the projects are located at the higher elevations of the district, some are near populated areas, and may result in a temporary reduction in air quality in the communities of Oakhurst, Fish Camp, Bass Lake, Ahwahnee, North Fork, and surrounding areas. Burning will be conducted on Burn Days as determined by the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District.

Counties Air Pollution Control District covers Mariposa County and determines Burn Day's on atmospheric conditions, which provide optimum smoke dispersal, however, normal diurnal wind changes allow the settling of drift smoke in basins and drainages during the late night and early morning hours. By limiting the number of piles ignited at one time, and by "mopping up" (extinguishing) smoldering piles it is expected that emissions will not reach unacceptable levels. Actions to reduce visibility hazards include monitoring high use roads and providing traffic control if necessary.

For questions or further information, please contact District Fuels Specialist Burt Stalter at 559-877-2218, extension 3208 at the Bass Lake District Headquarters in North Fork or by email bstalter@fs.fed.us.

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